



Hug a Flower?

OUTSIDEin

Guide

5-8

After reading “A Bouquet of Flowers” in the February issue of Outside In, discuss the importance of plants. The plant kingdom provides us with food, shelter, clothing, medications and oxygen to breathe. While many people feel a connection to animals that are endangered, endangered plant species are often overlooked, if not completely ignored.

The following exercise is from Plants in Peril, a publication by the Center for Plant Conservation. You may order a Missouri specific edition by writing to: Distribution Center, Missouri Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0180.

1. Have students read the following dilemma in groups of two or three and answer the following questions. This is a brief scenario and cannot possibly cover all the opinions and emotions of the people affected by the situation. For this reason, groups should identify what further information they feel they should know in order to draw conclusions or make recommendations. Also, have students identify all individuals or groups that should have input into the search for a solution.
 2. Student groups can then look for similar issues in this week's newspapers. What issues are people trying to make decisions about? Who needs to be involved? Think about whether the news articles prey on peoples' emotions, as opposed to simply stating facts. The groups can then make decisions about how they would handle these issues.
- area, but others worry that destroying the habitat could cause irreversible damage since these plants only grow in certain types of soil. Answer the following questions:
- A) Who is potentially affected by this dilemma?
 - B) What would your community gain by saving the plants?
 - C) What else do you need to know to make the decision about whether or not you agree with the plans to build a pool on the site?
 - D) Would you feel differently if there was an endangered animal rather than a rare plant on the site? Why or why not?

To receive a classroom quantity of Outside In, write to Missouri Department of Conservation, "Missouri Conservationist" magazine, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.

Dilemma

Plans are underway to build a new swimming pool in your neighborhood. A site has been chosen that will be safe for kids arriving by bike and will provide enough space for an Olympic-sized pool. However, the state botanist has just issued a report that there is a small population of a very rare native plant on this site. Your community has already gone through a lengthy process to choose a site that would meet its needs and some people are upset that plans might be changed because of a handful of plants. People have suggested building around the plants or moving them to a safer

